

# State Vocational Federation of Teachers

P.O. Box 290  
Rocky Hill, CT 06067-0290

Ph: (860) 721-0317  
1-800-378-8020  
Fx: (860) 721-0323  
Web Site: [www.svft.org](http://www.svft.org)

Testimony of Jan Hochadel, President  
State Vocational Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 4200A

Appropriations Committee  
April 29, 2013

As President of the 1230 educators in the Connecticut Technical School System, I chose to take the opportunity to negotiate eight economically de minimus items as allowed through the SEBAC 2011 agreement. Our contract language had not changed since 2006, and there were issues that were important to our members which needed to be addressed. The negotiation process resulted in an agreement that I believe is fair to both membership and the State.

One key issue for our members was to extend the internal transfer window for open positions. The benefit to our members is obvious: eligible employees can transfer into positions that are closer to their homes or in some other way meet their personal needs. It is my belief that this provision will also have some benefit to the State, improving school climate and employee morale, and reducing staff turnover. We acknowledged the State's concern that extending the transfer window could create logistic problems, and thus we have agreed to the State's request that this provision sunsets on August 31, 2016.

Another concern for SVFT members was that members could be administratively transferred 55 miles from their home. With gas prices approaching \$4.00 a gallon, administrative transfers often had a real financial impact on affected members. The State agreed to reduce the allowable distance to 40 miles; in exchange, the SVFT agreed to allow the employees to be moved 15 days after notification rather than the current mandatory waiting period of 30 days. I believe that this provision meets both the needs of the State and our members. It is indicative of the constructive collaboration that occurred between the SVFT and the CTHSS, and marked both the negotiating process and the agreement that resulted from it.

Other important issues resolved in this agreement include part-time employee rights, clarification on tuition reimbursement and some certification issues, and teacher schedules. The SVFT also agreed to provide some relief to the State on daily substitute costs. The current contract established a substitute rate that was far in excess of state averages. We agreed to a concession on the rate that would provide some savings, which could be better used to help fund the programs so important to our students. It is never easy to ask any of our members to take a reduction in salary, but we recognized the current rate was hampering the CTHSS's ability to adequately provide supplies and other necessities that impact student learning. We believe that we agreed to a daily substitute rate fair to both our substitutes and the State.